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AD/RR

18 February 1957

Acting Ch/G/RR

Probable GRA Comments to CIA Library Consultant Panel

1. The Accessions Process Selection

a. We consider the selection process to be adequate. Any centralization of the process would make it cumbersome and less responsive to the needs of the users.

b. Individual accessions lists and consolidated procurement lists are adequate and comparatively timely. For obvious reasons, the notification of items should be routed to interested parties as well as to the requester; however, this should be handled so as not to interrupt the prompt receipt of the item by the initial requester. Descriptions of the items accessioned, though generally limited to title and author, are adequate for working personnel.

c. It will be requested that items which are not to be catalogued carry in addition to the stamp, "not needed in the library", an indication of whether the item is a duplicate copy or simply does not meet requirements which guide the library cataloguing.

d. A strong criticism, buttressed by detailed examples, will be made of the time factor involved in purchasing books or obtaining retention copies of documents.

2. Cataloguing

a. The intelligence subject code, while presumably adequate for economic research, is not adequate for geographic research. The tape runs always include a high proportion of items which are not relevant since the breakdown by location is limited to country or, in some cases, major political subdivision. This is the equivalent of coding all references to any petroleum product, refinery, or pipeline under the single heading, petroleum, and leaving it to the researcher to sort out the items not wanted for a particular project. The magnitude

SECRET

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of the problem grows when the researcher analyzes a complex which straddles a border: he must tape-run each of the several aspects of the subject for two entire countries.

b. It is this major handicap which makes OCR consideration of the suggested Minicard system so important.

3. Circulation, Inter-Library Loans

Emphasis will be given to the importance of developing facilities which lend themselves to self-servicing and browsing. It is felt that the present mandatory rule requiring search of the CIA Library by a Search Unit before an Inter-Library loan request is honored is an unnecessary burden. Analysts do not normally enter into this paperwork unless they have verified that the item desired is not more directly accessible. Substantial delays would be obviated if the rule were changed to require affirmation of such search by the analyst concerned, with follow-up spot checks to police the system.

4. Machines

Several cases have occurred in which the reproduced copy of a document was illegible. It is felt that the selection of hard copies for retention might be broadened to accommodate those which obviously will not reproduce satisfactorily. The point will be made that the important time factor in reproduction is not the time of reproduction itself, but to the time lapse between request for and delivery of a document.

5. The criteria for retirement of Library material would be benefited by the addition of considerations other than age. A basic document often remains basic through the passage of years because the situation remains stable or later documents merely supplement it.

6. The Intelligence Orientation Course might well program an orientation tour through the Library. This might be accompanied by general issuance of a small guide book with floor plan.

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